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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/517,175	12/07/2004	Keith Grundon	AEL-4	5699
7590	09/27/2006		EXAMINER	
Ira S. Dorman Suite 200 330 Roberts Street East Hartford, CT 06108				IMAS, VLADIMIR
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			2839	

DATE MAILED: 09/27/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

<b>Office Action Summary</b>	<b>Application No.</b>	<b>Applicant(s)</b>
	10/517,175	GRUNDON, KEITH
	<b>Examiner</b>	<b>Art Unit</b>
	Vladimir Imaas	2839

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --  
**Period for Reply**

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
  - If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
  - Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

#### Status

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 11 September 2006.
- 2a) This action is FINAL.                    2b) This action is non-final.
- 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

#### Disposition of Claims

- 4) Claim(s) 1-10 is/are pending in the application.
  - 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) Claim(s) 1-10 is/are rejected.
- 7) Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

#### Application Papers

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.  
 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
 Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

#### Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
    - a) All    b) Some \* c) None of:
      1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
      2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
      3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- \* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

#### Attachment(s)

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)          | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)           |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date: _____                                      |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)          | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date: _____   | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____                          |

## DETAILED ACTION

### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103***

1. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

2. Claims 1-10 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Smith (US 5,516,298) in view of Romer (EP 1217919 B1).

Regarding claim 1, Smith, fig. 2 - 8, discloses a desk attachment, which includes: a base unit 40 including a communication bus 55', 61 having a communication port for connection to at least one remote signal source, and a user module 72 for attachment to the base unit such that it electrically connected with the bus via a respective bus connector, the module having a PC port 48 (central unit) for connection with a local computer and at least one peripheral port 48 (right unit) for connection with a user interface device, the port of the module being arranged such that a computer on the PC port is operably connected to the at least one peripheral port and, via the respective bus connector, to the bus. However, Smith does not disclose a plurality of bus connectors and a plurality of user modules for attachment to the base unit such that they are each electrically connected with the bus via a respective bus connector. Romer (EP 1217919 B1), fig. 2, discloses a plurality of bus connectors; and a plurality of user modules 1 for attachment to the base unit such that they are each electrically connected with the bus

via a respective bus connector. At the time the invention was made, it would have been to a person of ordinary skill in the art to provide Romer's multimodal performance for Smith's module units to provide each module being arranged such that a computer on the PC port is operably connected to the at least one peripheral port and, via the respective bus connector, to the bus.

Regarding claim 2, Smith discloses the base unit includes a channel-shaped chassis 70 for receiving the user modules.

Regarding claim 3, Smith discloses the channel-shaped chassis includes a base wall 46 for attachment to a desk, with upstanding front 44 and rear walls 33'.

Regarding claim 4, Smith discloses the base unit includes a duct 81, 82 to contain the communication bus.

Regarding claim 5, Smith discloses the base unit includes a channel-shaped chassis for receiving the user modules, the channel-shaped chassis includes a base wall for attachment to a desk, with upstanding front and rear walls, and the duct is formed at the junction between the base and rear walls.

Regarding claim 6, Smith discloses the duct is provided with a plurality of bus connectors 55', 61 engagement by the user modules.

Regarding claim 7 Smith discloses the bus connectors are mounted in spaced positions along the duct.

Regarding claim 8 Smith discloses each user module includes a housing which positively locates within the chassis (formed by side walls 71 and front face 72).

Regarding claim 9 Smith discloses the peripheral ports are mounted on an upper face of the housing which is exposed when the user module is received in the chassis.

Regarding claim 10 Smith discloses the channel-shaped chassis includes a base wall for attachment to a desk, with upstanding front and rear walls, and each PC port is aligned with an aperture in the front wall.

### ***Response to Arguments***

3. Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 1-10 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Applicant has argued, "... Smith fails to adequately teach the essential plurality of user modules for attachment to the base unit ... each having a PC port for connection with a local computer and at least one peripheral port for connection with a user interface device, the ports of the each module being arranged such that a computer on the PC port is operably connected to the at least one peripheral port and, via the respective bus connector, to the bus". The Examiner respectfully presented new ground of rejection.

### ***Conclusion***

4. **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL.** Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within

TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Vladimir Imas whose telephone number is 571-272-8288. The examiner can normally be reached on 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m..

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, T. Patel can be reached on 571-272-2098. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

VI  
Examiner  
Vladimir Imas  
9/18/2006

*TC Patel*  
TULSIDAS C. PATEL  
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER